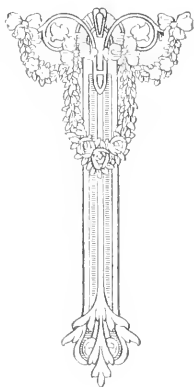


SAND

THE FOUR ACT COMEDY

By REBECCA DIAL



PRICE 50c

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By Wil Lou Gray

The State Co. Printers, Columbia, S. C.

SAND PLEASES AUDIENCES

"Sand," the four-act comedy, written by Miss Rebecca Dial and presented by Laurens people at five different places during the past week, played to capacity houses and was given a splendid reception at every performance. In every town the cast was shown many courtesies and the receipts from the sale of tickets will considerably aid in the campaign against illiteracy for which cause the play was written. The total receipts from all performances were in excess of \$600.

* * * * *

The cast was fortunate in having an interesting play to present. Comedy and pathos were well blended to make a play of great possibilities and the reception given by several audiences bore out the predictions of a genuine success.

The Laurens Advertiser, Laurens, S. C.

September 22, 1920.

MARION CLUB WOMEN PRESENT ILLITERACY PLAY

On Friday evening, July 3, Marion had the unusual pleasure of a real "first night" theatrical performance, with the further distinction of the playwright, Miss Rebecca Dial, in attendance to rehearse and direct. Deeply interested in South Carolina's low standing in adult illiteracy, Miss Dial, who is the daughter of U. S. Senator Dial, wrote this play as her contribution to the campaign now being waged to teach every man and woman to read and write. Miss Dial believed that an audience which beheld on the stage the portrayal of conditions in an illiterate home and the evolution toward greater personal respect and better citizenship in that home by "a little larnin'," as one of the characters says, would be stimulated into doing something concrete and immediate about teaching its own community illiterates. So this amateur play called "Sand", composed of actual happenings from actual night schools, resulted. Its initial appearance was at Marion, under the auspices of the three clubs, Owls, Papyrus, and Civic League.

Despite the rain a good crowd greeted the performers. There was not a dull moment from the beginning to the very end. The characters were well delineated by Marion men and girls. "Sand" runs the gamut from the wistful pathos of Mrs. Anderson's saying that she would not "feel so bound in if I could only count my eggs and keep my store bill" to gay comedy. There is a night school commencement just like real ones which are taking place over the State. There is a love story, of course, with the proper happy ending. And the final climax is full of both fun and romance.

The Marion Star, Marion, S. C.

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SAND

The Four Act Comedy



SUGGESTIONS FOR GETTING UP THE PLAY

First: Secure the cooperation of some prominent organization in the community to attend to the business connected with the play.

Second: Select the cast and at the first meeting discuss plans for the play. Set a date for its production, and read the play, each person reading the part assigned to him.

Third: Rehearse frequently and keep up the interest in the work. With nightly rehearsals, two weeks is ample time for production of the play.

Fourth: Insist on lines being memorized at the first rehearsal of each act.

Fifth: Advertise in papers, by posters, handbills, and personal boosters. "It pays to advertise."

Sixth: Sell tickets in advance.

Seventh: Provide popular music between acts.

Eighth: Have popular instrumental music with orchestra, if possible, while the audience is assembling.

Ninth: Just before the curtain goes up, in order to quiet the audience, let the cast sing the following:

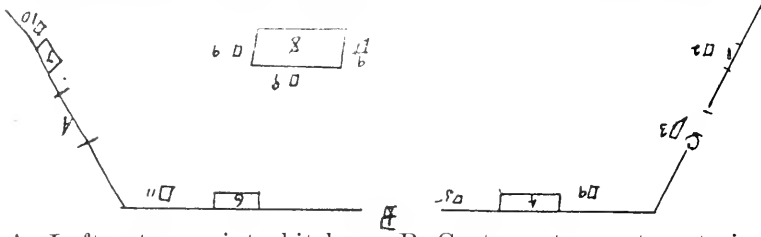
"Night school will shine tonight,
Night school will shine.

Night school will shine tonight,
Won't that be fine?

Night school will shine tonight,
Night school will shine.

When the sun goes down and the moon comes up,
Night school will shine."

DESIGN OF STAGE WITH LIST OF PROPERTIES



A. Left entrance into kitchen. B. Center entrance to exterior.
C. Window.

ACT I.

1. Mantel. Covered with dried peppers, cabbage, and any vegetables or South Carolina fruits obtainable.

2. Old-fashioned rocker.

3. Bench.

4. Organ with gay ornaments.

5. Hall-tree.

6. Cupboard with a few dishes in it. Pans, tin cans, etc., on top.

7. Small table, littered with boxes, papers, clothes, etc.

8. Dining-room table, with red table cloth and lamp.

9. Four straight chairs.

10. Water-bucket with a dipper on stool.

11. Easel with family portrait on it.

Gaudy calendars, patent medicine, turkey-wing fans, and all kinds of trash.

ACT II.

1. Eight straight chairs added around the table.

2. Blackboard and flag over the small table.

3. Ten books, ten tablets and pencils.

ACT III.

1. Window curtains.

ACT IV.

1. Mantel with fire and grate. A rolling grate may be used. If there are no electric lights, a flashlight covered with red tissue paper and several sticks of wood will give the effect of fire.

2. Morris chair.

3. Buffet with white cover and flowers.

4. Serving table.

5. Four chairs to match the set.

6. Dining room table with white cloth and vase of flowers.

7. Pot plant on stand.

Christmas touches, wreathes, etc., on the mantel, buffet, and table. Several rugs and well-chosen pictures.

SONGS TO BE USED IN ACT II OR BY A QUARTET
BETWEEN ACTS.

Tune: Battle Hymn of the Republic.

We've all attended Adult School,
We've learnt to read and write.
We have overcome the darkness
And the new way seems so bright
We want to help our fellowman
To do the things that right—
To join the Adult School.

Chorus

Get a pupil for the Adult School,
Get a pupil for the Adult School,
Get a pupil for the Adult School,
Let's make the map all white.

Tune: Smiles.

There are books for little children,
There are books for big ones, too.
There are schools to teach you how to use them,
And these school are surely meant for you.
There'll be Adult Schools for you in August
When the crops are all laid by,
And you will be given the opportunity
That was denied you in days gone by.

Tune: Keep the Home Fires Burning.

Keep the night oil burning,
Keep the pages turning,
Keep the adults yearning,
Thirsting for knowledge rules.
Take some education
Out among the nation,
Help light up creation
With the adult school.

SAND

Written by Rebecca Dial

THE CAST

- Mr. Anderson.....An elderly man, very lazy, shabbily dressed. In first act smoking constantly. After Act I he shows improvement in appearance.
- Mrs. Anderson.....Nervous, energetic woman over fifty.
- WARREN ANDERSON....Soldier son.
- Jimmie Anderson.....In Act I age 9 years. Red headed, freckled, etc.
- Minnie Niagara Jones. Impulsive, flashy creature. In Act I Warren's sweetheart.
- Harriet Gary.....Teacher of night schools. A junior at Winthrop in Act I. Reserved, yet sympathetic.
- Buck Upshaw.....One of Minnie's suitors.
- Chaney Lawton.....Grocer; white hair, very blond
- Mrs. Roebuck.....Mother of a large family
- Mary Ferguson.....A helper of Miss Gary in Act II.
- Mr. Cox}
- Mr. Farrow} Trustees.
- Mr. Harrington, Miss Gary's friend.....{ Managers of the Lau-
- Mr. Peyton}rens Glass Factory

Night school
pupils

ACT I—Dining room of the Anderson farm home near Blankville, S. C., June of 1919.

ACT II—Scene same. Time—eight weeks later. Commencement of Night School.

ACT III—Scene same as Act I. Time—several days later than Act II.

ACT IV—Scene same as Act I. Five years later. A week before Christmas.

NOTE I.—For convenience the scene is same throughout, though Act II could be staged in a school room, very bare with only benches or chairs and possibly an organ.

NOTE II.—In each act there should be improvement in appearance of room. In Acts I, II and III very bare, though improving in tidiness in Acts II and III. In Act IV touches showing increased culture—Christmas touches also.

ACT I.

SCENE: Dining room in Mr. Anderson's home near Blankville, S. C. Very bare and uninviting. Entrance left into the kitchen. Entrance center from the exterior. Fireplace down right with a chair in front of it. Organ right of center entrance. Window between mantel and organ. Cupboard up left. Table with three chairs down left center. Red cover on table, lamp. All the furnishings denote poverty. Room appears cluttered and untidy.

Discovered—Mr. Anderson, shabby and disgruntled, seated by fireplace with shoes and coat and collar off. Suspender fastened with a nail, patches in the seat of his trousers, smoking corncob pipe.

Enter Mrs. Anderson with arms full of bundles. He turns his head deliberately and looks at her without speaking.

Mrs. A. [Placing packages on the table]: "Wall, Pap, I've jes' been buyin' our supper an' ef things keeps on a goin' higher, I speck you'll have to go to work. Of course that will be pretty hard on you when you've got the settin' round habit so strong, but a heap o' folks is havin' to change their ways with the war. [Hanging up her bonnet and putting packages in the cupboard.] Here's your mail. I wuz most fergittin' to give it to you—three pieces" [handing it to him].

Mr. A. [Opening first letter. Mrs. A. continuing to put packages in the cupboard]: "Of course I can't make nothin' out o' them tel Jimmie comes homes, but I kin stedy over 'em. Wonder whut these little chicken scratchin' marks mean on this one?"

Mrs. A. [Has started to sit. Comes back, looking over his shoulder]: "They's allus (always) inventin' some new way o' doin' things, but fer folks that can't read readin' much less writin' they outer be keerful how they put it."

Mr. A.: "It peers to me it would take some brainy feller to make different words out o' them little straight marks made in couples. I can't make nothin' out o' it, so I'll be lookin' in this next one." [Mrs. A. is seated, darning, center chair. He opens second letter.] "The top picture on its looks powerful like the one I got las' month about the mortgage on our farm."

Mrs. A.: "Yes, I recollie' it said if we didn't pay up the back interest in thirty days they'd have to turn us out o' house and home."

Mr. A.: "With Warren gone, it don't seem like I kin keep things goin'. In this sandy country farmin's no use."

Mrs. A.: "He showly wuz a big help and I hope we kin soon get him back."

Mr. A.: "Ef he wuz here, maybe he could think uf somepun (something). I'm 'bout petered out, an ef 'twuzen't fer givin' up the roof over my head I'd be right thankful to wish this no count sandy land on to Mr. Sawyer."

Mrs. A.: "Now, Sam, you know you'd hate to turn over land whut's been in the Anderson family for a hunded years to pure

strangers and have 'em restin' under our shade trees, drinkin' out o' our spring, and lardin' it round the place. [Looking out of the window.] Here comes Jimmie now. We'll soon be able to make out what these quar markin's means."

[Enter Jimmie, center. Whistling. Tries to pitch cap on peg.]

Mr. A.: "Here, Jimmie, we want you to do a little readin' fer us." [Hands bill to Jimmie.]

Jimmie: "All right, pap. [Mrs. Anderson crosses and looks over pap's shoulder.] This is from Sandy Lawton's grocery. He has a new clerk what sends out the bill in writin' sted o' usin' signs like Sandy does." [Reads]:

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| "June 1st 2 lbs. bacon..... | 90c |
| " " 3 " lard | \$1.00 |
| " 3rd " " sugar | " |

"Mr. A.: Wait, Jimmie; how are you gettin' all them words outin' them little double eyelash marks there [pointing to ditto marks]?"

Jimmie: "Oh. Pap, them—I mean those are ditto marks, and mean the same as the word above."

Mr. A.: "Wal, ole lady, I guess that means you're one darn fool an' I'm another (Ha! Ha!) Here, Jimmie, tell us what this says?" [Mrs. A. crosses back to center seat.]

[Jimmie reads]: "Blankville, S. C., June 29th, 1919.

"Mr. S. A. Anderson,

"Blankville, S. C., R. F. D. No. 3.

"Dear Sir:

"I regret that I must write you again in regard to the back interest on the mortgage on your farm and homestead. You have allowed the same to lapse for fourteen months, and in case I do not receive part of that amount or some assurance of its being paid in the next few days, it will be necessary for me to foreclose. Please let me hear from you, for I am anxious to know how you stand in regard to the matter even though you may not have the money.

Yours truly,

"J. B. Sawyer."

[Jimmie goes to cupboard; gets biscuit out and eats.]

Mr. A.: "Wal, I'll be durned ef the ole fool don't seem to be hankerin' mo' after a scrap o' writin' from me than fer his money."

Mrs. A.: "He wants both it seems to me, an' I guess he is tired o' usin' up stamps and gettin' nothin' in return."

Mr. A.: "Wall, there don't seem no way fer me to scrape up the money, but I guess I kin send him a word to ease his mind. Here, Jimmie, take down this leeter."

Jimmie: "All right, pap." [Goes to left of table.]

Mr. A.: "'Ef I had——"

Jimmie: "Wait, pap; don't you want no headin' or polite salutation?"

Mr. A.: "Don't bother me with them extra frills. What I want is a letter that will satisfy him. I want you to say: 'Ef I had a knowed that you wanted a letter I would a writ, but I thought that you wanted money, and there are no money.' Now you kin put on as many heads and feet an' bows and salutin's as you want."

[Jimmie writes.]

Mrs. A.: "Ole man, you spoke gospel in them few words, and though Mr. Sawyer is a kind lawyer, it's money not gospel he's after, and I feel like this is our las' warnin'."

Mr. A.: "Oh, he's been so nice and considerin' fer so long, I don't see how he could spoil it now by turnin' a respectin' family out'n whuts been theirs a hundred years er mo."

Mrs. A.: "Wal, in these times bizness is bizness, and folks don't use much heart grease. To my way o' calculatin' its pay up the \$600 back interest or turn gypsies one."

[Knock at door.]

Mr. A.: "Lift the latch."

[Enter Warren, soldier son.]

Warren: "Hello, folks!"

Mrs. A.: "Sonny!"

Jimmie [spinning around]: "It's Warren!"

Warren: "Well, kid!"

Mr. A.: "Wall, bud [rising with difficulty], shake yer pap's hand."

Warren: "Wuzn't you lookin' fer me? I wrote you last week that I'd get loose by today."

Mr. A. [sits by mantel]: "No, we hadn't heard less it wuz in this other letter we hadn't started on yet."

Mrs. A.: "We had to wait for Jimmie to read 'em to us. He's larnin' powerful good at school since they put in the compulsion law and we've been having to send him to school. It's a big help to us as ain't had no chance." [Sits back of table. Warren center. Jimmie stands behind his chair admiring hat, uniform, etc.]

Warren: "Go to it, buddie. It's a heap easier and better to get it when you're a little chap 'stead o' waitin' til you are grown like I was."

Jimmie: "I don't see how you had time fer book learnin' when you wuz fightin' so hard."

Warren: "It was this way. When I first got in the army I used to look at the boys puttin' down on paper the things they wuz thinkin' and sendin' 'em back home, an' I wuz sorry I wuz such a know nothin' kind. I made up my mind to get learnin' my first chance, and you bet I wuz tickled when my captain called me up one day after the war wuz over and told me I could stay in the army and go to one of the schools they wuz startin'."

Mr. A.: "It must a cost you a heap o' money?"

Warren: "No, they gave the schoolin' free, and I could draw my pay all at the same time."

Mrs. A.: "It must a been awful hard work fer you."

Warren: "Yes, it was at first, but I knew it wuz my only chance, so I worked away. The teacher helped me a lot, and the preacher in our regiment used to come over to my barracks at night and help me. Now I read and figger pretty good, an' I've been er savin' up my money, too. I ain't ready to stop either, fer a little learnin' makes a fellow want to keep on."

Mrs. A.: "Jimmie, show Warren the letter you just writ for yer Pap."

[Warren reads.]

Warren: "Oh, Pap, a letter like that won't do no good. How much do you have to raise?"

Mr. A.: "It's mor'n I could get up in the rest of my life, unless I went to work, which I swore off from back in '98, the year I had the rheumatiz in my left arm. Boy, it's \$600."

Warren [thinking]: "Jimmie, tear up that letter you jes wrote. You do better letter'n than me, so take this down—"

[Jimmie tears the letter and crosses to mantel, throwing pieces in box. Recrosses in front of table to chair left of table.]

"Dear Mr. Sawyer:

"Enclosed please find check for \$500 for back interest on the mortgage on our farm and homestead. The remaining \$100 will follow soon. Thank you for your kindness.

"Yours truly,

"S. A. Anderson."

[Warren writes check.]

Mr. A.: "Boy, you're not doin' anything out o' the way, be you?"

Warren: "No, Pap, jes' writing you a check fer a little I've been layin' by. Here, Jimmie."

[Jimmie crosses back of table, takes check, encloses it in letter and hands to Mr. A.]

Mrs. A.: "Oh, Warren, you do make my ole heart glad savin' us from disgrace." [Tears in her eyes.]

Mr. A. [sheepishly]: "I guess I oughta be mo' account."

Warren [handing letter to Mrs. A.]: "Don't worry, Dad, we'll have a home as long as I have two good hands."

Mr. A.: "Wall, I guess I'll be mailin' this for it'll make my mind easier to know the money's on its way."

[Exit Mr. Anderson, left. Mrs. A. and Jimmie start out.]

[Enter Minnie Niagara, center.]

Minnie: "I jes' couldn't wait to see you."

Warren [catching both her hands]: "My, but it's good to see you."

Minnie: "Howdy, Mrs. Anderson; howdy, Jimmie."

Mrs. A. [from left door]: "Jes' make yourself to home. Jimmie and me's goin' to see after supper. We hope you'll stay for a bite with us."

Minnie: "Thanks, Mrs. Anderson, I'll be glad to; we ain't had nary square meal to home of late, and a bite o' your cookin' would be so good. [Exit Mrs. A. and Jimmie.] 'sides spendin' a while with my financy where there ain't a pacer o' cryin' kids."

[Minnie sits on table. Warren stands by her.]

Minnie: "I'm show glad you wrote me erbout savin' up that money. Pap give me five dollars an' I've been buyin' up my trousseau, an' on your money we kin have a trip to Columbia, ride in ortimobiles, go to movin' picters, and act like real swells."

[Warren starts to speak] "Minnie, I——"

Minnie: "With all that money, you kin buy me a lot o' lace an' silk stockings and red stuff for my face. Oh, it will be grand." [Grabs Warren around the neck impulsively.]

Warren: "Minnie, I must tell you somethin' at once. I've had to pay my savings on the mortgage, an' I owe some more. I'll get right to work and make it and if you are willin' to wait a little while——"

Minnie: "What! [Jumping from table and crossing to right front] Put me off like that! You're jes' tellin' that to keep your money fer yourself. I don't mean to stand 'round waitin' fer no man. Ef you don't want me now, I'll go an' marry Buck Upshaw. He's promised to buy me a Ford car if I'll marry him, an' he'll take me on a trip clear to Atlanta. So there, now, Mr. Warren Anderson, keep your ole \$500."

Warren: "Minnie, you witch, I'm not tryin' to put you off. I want you more'n anything in the worl', but I couldn't be a undutiful son, Minnie, ef you'll jes' be a little patient I'll soon have some more an'——" [Follows her and takes her hands.]

Minnie [pushing him off and starting toward center door]: "Oh, I'm used to tales like that. Buck has the cash, and is willin' to spend it on me. That's what I'm after. I'm through with you——" [Exit Minnie, center.]

[Warren goes to the window, looks after her, dejected sinks on the bench.]

[Enter Jimmie left. He has appeared in doorway during the above conversation.]

Jimmie [goes to Warren with head bowed. Places hand on shoulder]: "Say, Buddie, don't worry 'bout her high fellutin' ways. I'd let Buck Upshaw have her, ef twus me, only he don't want her, fer I heard him laughin' 'bout her down at Roberson's store the other day. And 'sides, Warren, she slaps the younguns around'. I wouldn't take her on a Christmas tree."

Warren: "Kid, all that may be true but she's had a pretty hard time of it. Maybe she's just a foolin' about Buck."

[Enter Mr. A. with Miss Gary, center.]

Mr. A.: "Warren, I met this lady down at the bank. She has something special to talk to us 'bout."

[Miss Gary speaks to Jimmie on side.] "That's Jimmie and this is Warren, our soldier." [They shake hands. Mr. A. crosses

to left entrance and calls]: "Ole lady, come in, thar's a lady to see us."

[Enter Mrs. Anderson, left, wiping her hands on her apron.]

Mrs. A.: "Howdy, ma'am [shakes hands]. Won't you rest yer bonnet and be seated?"

Miss Gary: "Thank you. I'll sit here." [Sits center.]

Mrs. A.: "Jimmie, hang the lady's bonnet on the peg [Jimmie does as bid] and run watch the biscuits to keep 'em from burnin'." [Exit left.]

[Mr. A. sits by mantel, Mrs. A. by him, Warren back of table.]

Miss Gary: "I suppose you want to know why I'm here, so I'll tell you about it right away. There is a movement in our State to teach men and women who didn't have a chance to go to school when they were young."

Mrs. A.: "You showly don't think you could larn old folks like me an' Pap anything?"

Miss Gary: "Yes, you are the very kind that we want to help. There is no age limit to it. Last summer, in one of our schools a woman about your age learned to read and write, and by the end of the three weeks could spell one hundred and fifty words. By the end of a few weeks many who had known nothing about reading or figures had learned enough to help them in their work."

Mrs. A.: "How do you manage it?"

Miss Gary: "There are different ways of carrying on the school. Sometimes we meet in the school house, or if the pupils like it better, we go into their homes and help them in small groups. We let our pupils say what time suits them best."

Mrs. A.: "I don't zactly know when I could get time, though I would show love to have some learnin'. Seems like I wouldn't feel so bound in ef I could count my eggs and keep up with the price ar things better. I show would a love to a writ to my boy thar, thout havin' to git folks thet didn't have no heart in it to do it fer me."

Miss Gary: "What time would suit you and Mr. Anderson best?"

Mrs. A.: "I hardly has a minute, but I guess you could have a all day session with Pap mos' any time, for he spends mos' ar his time er settin' roun'."

Miss Gary: "Mr. Anderson, would you rather come to a day or night class?"

[Mr. A. has been scowling during above, while Warren has been beaming. Both have remained silent.]

Mr. A.: "I'm agin the whole thing. Larnin' may be all right fer young folks, but such new fangled doings ain't for the likes of me and Ma. We ben a livin' a good while like we is an' I guess we kin go on an' die that way."

Miss Gary: "This isn't something new. Where it has been tried men and women have become more useful and can be happier. All I want is for you to give me a chance to help you. If you don't like it, you can stop at any time."

Mr. A.: "There won't be no stoppin' fer me fer there won't be no beginnin'. I'm agin such tom foolery from start to finish, and that's the end uv it."

Warren: "No, Pap, that can't be the end of it. I've been listening to what the young lady says, and I know as she's the kind to help us. Ef she'll try me, I want to get some more schoolin', and if she wants to meet in this house we'll turn it over to her as often as she wants."

Mr. A. [angrily]: "When did you get to tellin' yer old dad whut to do?"

Warren: "I ain't tellin' you what to do, but I have part interest in this house, and I'm a sayin' facts."

Mrs. A.: "Mercy, I believe Jimmie's lettin' the biscuits burn." [Exit left.]

[Warren and Miss Gary talk on the side.]

Mr. A. [Crossing, looks out left entrance]: "I guess I'd better look into this. Thar he sets with a book. That's whut edicashun has done for one member of my family. Now, ef my ole woman gets such notions I guess I'll be eatin' cinders the rest o' my natural life. Come here to me, sir [to Jimmie outside]. [Exit left.]

Miss Gary: "Your father seems prejudiced, but with yours and your mother's help, and when we show him some real biscuits, maybe we can interest him. Now, if we can arrange for a group meetings in your house twice a week for eight weeks, I'll go on to some of the others."

Warren: "Bet your life you can." [Gets her hat from peg.]

Miss Gary: "Thank you. Good-bye."

Warren: "Good-bye. [Exit Miss Gary, center]. And as many side meetings as she choose." [Enter Jimmie, left.]

Warren: "Kid, if I can go on with my schoolin' maybe I won't mind so much about Minnie Niagara."

Jimmie: "Schoolin' don't make me no tougher when Pa beats me, but maybe it will help your feelings about Minnie."

Curtains.

ACT II.

Eight months later. Room arranged for closing session of night school. Folding blackboard at one side. Eight chairs around table. Beginning at center pupils are seated in following order: Jimmie, Warren, Minnie, Buck, Mrs. Roebuck, Mrs. Anderson, Mr. Anderson. American flags over mantel, room neater than in previous scene.

Discovered.—Miss Gary assorting some papers by a table. Mary Ferguson seated by her. Mr. Anderson seated by fireplace. Enter Warren.

Warren: "I've finished it [pitching *Adult Primer* in the air], and next week I'm going to begin on the Bible."

Miss Gary: "That's great, and I hope there won't be any stopping until you've gotten your college diploma."

Warren: "No, ma'am, I don't expect to stop then. Let me read you the [name of local paper] to show how good I can do it."

Miss Gary: "All right, let's hear it."

[Warren reads locals arranged for each town.]

[The following may be used as an outline, though it is better to get the latest hits in each community:]

Warren [reading]: "The following panel of jurors has been drawn for court convening *the first week* in..... (Names of men and women of varying ages and classes)."

Warren [reading]: "The town of is suffering from a matrimonial epidemic. Due to the nature of the malady, it is thought best that no names be published."

Mr. A.: "I heard that Miss (name of old maid) wuz one of those."

Warren: "No, I asked her about it, and she said that it wasn't so, but she's thanked the Lord for the report."

Warren [reading]: "The whole town was greatly aroused this week to learn that Mrs. had dyed—"

Mary F.: "What?"

Warren: "Oh, that ain't all. [Reads] "Her old coat."

Mary and Miss Gray: "Oh!"

Warren [reading]: "Miss has two charming young ladies, Misses and visiting her."

Mr. A.: "I know two old bachelors that'll be glad to hear it—ole Mr. and Mr."

Warren [still reading]: "Miss Gary, I can't make out this word."

Miss Gary: "Get your dictionary and look it up."

Mary Ferguson: "Didn't you know [name of local character dealing in big words] had swallowed it?"

Warren: "I know now. [Reads]: "Harrington—Mr. H. A. Harrington, a prominent young business man of Rockton, has taken charge of the Laurens Glass Factory with Mr. Peyton, already employed by that firm. He bids fair to make a big success in his new field——"

Mary: "Oh, Miss Gary! he's *your* Mr. Harrington——"

Miss Gary [blushingly begins] You absurd child——"

Mary: "Oh, you needn't deny it, for I believe you like him, too. Warren, you haven't seen Miss Gary's beau?"

Warren: "No, 'spec I will some day. [Continues to read paper.] "It says here he's lookin' out for S-i-l-i-c-a. What's that?"

Miss Gary: "That's the kind of sand they use for making glass. You remember the scientist who was here last month, said that it is found on your place?"

Warren: "Yes, and maybe this Mr. Harrington of yours will buy some of it from me."

Miss Gary: "A splendid idea. You must write to him about it."

[Enter Mrs. Anderson, notebook in hand, and Mrs. Roebuck with baby.]

Mrs. Anderson: "Here's some of the things about cooking I got Miss Gary to write down. I like this one about not frying everything."

Mrs. Roebuck: "She's done learned us a heap. Howdy, Miss Gary. I had to bring Liza Ann along to keep her from eatin' the cotton out'n the pillers. She's got a liken for it and ever time I leave her to home she eats the stuffin' out'n the sofie pillers. I hope you don't keer."

Miss Gary: "Not at all. We're glad to have the children. Good evening, Mrs. Anderson."

Mrs. Anderson: "Good evenin', ma'am."

[Enter Jimmie.]

Jimmie: Miss Gary, I done learned a speech for today. Pleas'm let me say it before it slips my mind."

Miss Gary: "Go right ahead."

Jimmie [bowing]:

"Merry have we met,
Merry have we been,
Merry may we part
And merry meet again."

[If desired another speech may be substituted.]

[Baby cries.] Mary: "I'll take the baby out and play with her." [Exit left.]

[Enter trustees, Mr. Cox and Mr. Farrow.]

Miss Gary: "How do you do, Mr. Cox [shaking hands], and Mr. Farrow. [They bow.] "I am so glad you've called today to see some of the things which we have done in the past eight weeks. Won't you have these seats?" [Pointing to chairs near the mantel.] [Mr. A. crosses to chair left end of table.]

Mr. Cox: "Thank you." [They are seated.]

[Enter Minnie, powdering her nose]: "Howdy, folks." [Makes Jimmie give her chair by Warren. Followed by Chaney, who carries a ham which he places on table.]

Chaney: "Miss Gary, I wanted to show you how much I think uv you fer helping me like you done, and I want to make this little present. If I wuz to give the way I feel, I'd a brought the whole pig, but I was afraid you couldn't git it in your trunk."

Miss Gary: "Thank you very much, Chaney. You are very thoughtful. Now we will begin our work. We are going to follow our regular program with a few closing exercises added."

To get us all feeling good we will sing one of the songs which we have learned. What do you choose?"

Jimmie: "The Star Spangled Banner."

Chaney: "Naw, I don't like them bums bustin' in th' hair."

Warren: "Dixieland."

Minnie: "There Are Books for Little Children."

Mrs. A.: "Keep the Home Fires Burnin'. I like to sing that one 'cause it makes me so glad to have my boy back again."

Mr. A.: "That, or 'Let the Women Do the Work.'"

Miss Gary: "There are so many suggestions that we will have to vote on it. Those in favor of 'Star Spangled Banner' raise their hands, etc."

Mr. A.: "Too high." [One vote.]

Miss Gary: "Dixieland."

Mrs. A.: "Nope." [One hand.]

Miss Gary: "There Are Books for Little Children." [All hands.]

Miss Gary: "I will call Mary to play for us. [Goes to door and calls:] Mary, will you play for us?" [Mary goes to the organ. They cross to organ and sing heartily.]

Miss Gary: "Now, I guess we are all ready with our jokes."

[When possible use local names in jokes.]

[Jimmie in chair right of table.]

Jimmie: "Let me tell mine first."

Miss Gary: "All right."

Jimmie: "Once a boy and a girl was sittin' under a apple tree. The girl said: 'Listen to that tree a moanin'.' 'Yep,' says the boy, 'You'd be a moanin' too if you was as full of green apples as that tree.'" [All laugh.]

Minnie Niagara: "That ain't ez funny es mine" [giggling]. "Two boys wuz agoin' down the street when they passes a pretty girl. One uv 'em says after they'd got by, 'Did you see that pretty girl smile at me awhile ago?' The other one says, 'That ain't nothin', I nearly laughed myself to death the first time I seen you.'"

Miss Gary: "Mrs. Roebuck, what funny story have you?"

Mrs. Roebuck: "Mine ain't much, but it kinder tickled me the other day to hear my little Susie tell this one: She axed why is a baby an' a widder alike. Kin anybody answer it?"

[Pupils answer, "No."]

Mrs. Roebuck: "'Cause they both cry fer the first six months, then the second six months they begin to take notice, an' it's hard to get through the second summer."

Mrs. A.: "Mine's a true one. The other night Eliza Stokes had meat fer supper, whut she told her husband wuz spring lamb, and he said, 'Yep, I knows it. I's been a chewing on one of the springs fer the last five minute.'"

Minnie: "It must a been out your store, Mr. Chaney."

Mr. A.: Or [name of local meat market.]

Chaney: "Some folks say as it's that way from both of them. Speakin' o' animals it reminds me o' the time brother Johnson wuz going aroun' this section askin' about how many Episcopalists they wuz. He came to old Miss Mary Jane Jessups and when he ax her she said, 'I don't exactly know whether thars any around here. My old man's always huntin' and the hides of the critters is hanging up down in the barn so you kin go down and look.'"

Mr. A.: "I jes' been waiting to tell you 'bout the meetin' Brother Johnson held fer married men. Along toward the end he got to exhortin' all the married men whut had troubles with they partners uv their bosoms to stand up. All 'cept one man way back in the corner riz. Parson says, 'Ah, my man, you're one in a million.' 'Taint that 'spons the fellow, 'I can't it up, I'm paralyzed.'"

Mrs. A.: "Maybe he wuz too lazy."

[Enter Buck Upshaw, center, breathless.]

Buck: "I just got out in time to come."

Miss Gary: "Out of what?"

Buck: "Out of jail. I got locked up fer givin' Hal Jackson a black eye fer sayin' readin' warn't no good."

Miss Gary: "Well, I'm glad you got here and we are just ready for your joke."

Buck: "Yes'm. I got a good one on ole Bill Warner who lives over in Huck a Boo Swamp. His wife went kinder out o' her head onct, and after stedyng a while Bill says he didn't see whut done it, fer she ain't went out o' the back yard in nigh on to twenty years."

Miss Gary: "Now, we will begin our arithmetic lesson." [Writes problem on board.] "If one cake of soap costs twenty-three cents what will forty-eight cakes cost?"

Buck: "It would take a heap of washin' to use up that much."

[All work on paper laboriously.]

Mrs. A.: "Addin' or times?"

Mr. A.: "I got it. \$11.04 (eleven dollars and 4 cent). Who would a thought I ever could do it!"

Miss Gary: "That's correct. If one can of beans cost 19c, how much would thirty-three cost?"

Mrs. A.: "I know that—\$6.27 (six dollars, 27 cent). Chaney, your clerk tried to charge me 28c the other day and I begun on my three tables and found out he wuz wrong."

Mr. A.: "Chaney, you be kerful how you treat my ole 'oman. I has to pay fer it."

Miss Gary: "If 1 pound of candy costs \$1.40, how much would ten pounds cost?"

Buck: "\$14.00."

Minnie [disdainfully]: "You must a been sendin' some to know so quick how much it costs."

Miss Gary: "Now, what is the entire bill?"

Mr. A.: "Wait. I got one I want to put in, afore you add it all up. Tother day Ben Higgins went to Chaney's store and ax how much candy wuz. 'Six sticks fer five cent,' says Chaney. Ben he thought a minute an' says, 'If six sticks is fer 5 cent, then five sticks would be 4 cent, four sticks would be 3 cent, three sticks would be 2 cent, two sticks would be 1 cent, and one stick would be nothin'. I'll take the one stick.'" [All laugh.]

Miss Gary: "Now, what is the entire bill?"

Mrs. Roebuck: "That's a heap o' addin', but it's the kind of figgerin' Susie and Janie's alus axin' 'bont. Won't I be proud to show 'em how to do they sums."

[Mary Ferguson goes over and helps her.]

Miss Gary: "Jimmie, put yours on the board."

[Jimmie writes]: 11.04 Four, eleven. Put down one, carry one.

6.27 Three.

14.00 Four, ten, eleven. Put down one,

——— carry one.

\$31.33 Two, three. [Reads answer.]

Miss Gary: "We will now have our reading lesson. Turn to page 2 in our readers. Mr. Anderson, we will let you read today."

"Results of Keeping Children from School."

"James Jordan sent his children to school every day. He never let them stay for work or weather or for anything except sickness.

"Do you see that well-kept farm over there with that large house and barn and that fine crop of hay? That is where James Jordan's son lives. Another fine farm near here is owned by James Jordan's daughter.

"William once owned a farm of the same size and value as that of his neighbor, James Jordan. William kept his children from school to pick beans, he kept them to shuck corn, he kept them to pick cotton, he kept them to worm tobacco, and he kept them at home whenever he could find an excuse. His children dropped behind and could not keep up with the others in their classes. They soon became discouraged and quit school.

"Do you see that small tenant house? That is where William Bolling's son lives. He is a tenant on the farm of James Jordan's son. William Bolling's daughter married a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow. He sits up and smokes his pipe on the porch while his wife is nothing but a drudge in the home. William Bolling left his children houses and lands, but they did not know how to take care of them.

"Education makes the difference in the condition of these two families."

Miss Gary: "That is very good. You are improving greatly, Mr. Anderson. Now we are going to let Buck recite his favorite selection from the Primer for us. Come around to the front, Buck." [Buck crosses to the front.]

Buck [Recites]: Get's mixed up and says, "I am repelled to begin agin."

"God made man,
Woman makes bread.
It takes the bread
That woman makes
To sustain the man
That God made.
But the bread
That some women make
Would not sustain any man
That God ever made."

Miss Gary: "Now, we will write a letter. Let's make it to our Supervisor of Adult Schools, telling her how we like the work, and why."

Buck: "Kin I put *my* dear Miss Gray?"

[Miss Gary bows assent.]

Warren: "He can put *my* to her, but I'll punch his head if he goes tryin' it on any of our other teachers."

[Miss Gary moves around among pupils as they write, helping them with words, punctuation, etc.]

Miss Gary: "Chaney, we will let you read your letter."

[Chaney reads]: "Blankville, S. C., August 30, 1919.

"Dear Miss Gray:

"I like our night school fine. I like it mos' because it helps me to keep my store. I know better how to count things.

"Yours truly,
"Chaney Lawton."

Jimmie: "Minnie says she likes to come to school so's she can see her beau."

Minnie: "I didn't no sech thing."

Jimmie: "Did."

Minnie: "Didn't. [Looking over Warren's shoulder.] You oughter see what Warren's wrote."

Miss Gary: "Let's hear yours Warren."

Warren [looks confused, reads]:

"Dear Miss Gray:

"I like to go to night school because it helps me to get a start to a real college education. I want to be something' an' it takes learning to do it.

"Yours truly,
"Warren Anderson."

Minnie Niagara: "That ain't all. On this one whut he dropped on the floor he says, 'I like to go most of all 'cause I love my teacher.'"

[All show surprise.]

Mr. A.: "And that's good enough reason for all uv us. I can't say all I want to in my letter, 'cause I don't know how to spell all the words yet, but I kin stand on my two legs and say out that this school has meant mo' to me than anything that's ever happened to me in my life. It's some how like getting religion, and seems to have peeled the scales offin' my eyes. As you all know I wuz powerful again it at first, but I somehow couldn't keep out of it, and the little learnin' I've got makes me feel like a free man and twenty years younger. Instead of hinderin' my boys now I'm going to do all I kin to help them with their schoolin', and even my ole 'oman has got my consent to pack all she kin into her head for instead uv making her burn up biscuits, it helps her cook 'em ten times better'n she done before."

[Sits down, wiping the perspiration from brow. Enthusiastic buzz.]

Mrs. A.: "You done said some more gospel. Them's my sentiments."

Minnie: "He show spit a parable."

Mr. Farrow: "I'd like to say right here that Miss Gary deserves every word of praise we can say for her, not only for her work in this school, but for the individual work in the community. Right on my own place she's helped my overseer, who was so ashamed of being ignorant that he didn't even want to join this little group. She has taken him by himself for a whole lot of lessons, and now he's worth about twice as much to me. And he's not the only one. [Sits down.]

Miss Gary: "Thank you."

Miss Gary: "Thank you. Our hour is up for today, and after we have saluted the flag our last lesson will be over."

All rise and together say:

"I pledge allegiance to my flag, and the republic for which it stands, one Nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

[Pupils and trustees flock around Miss Gary, telling her good-bye.]

Miss Gary: "I'm sorry to leave you all, but if I'm to catch the five-thirty I must hurry."

Buck: "We showly hates to tell you good-bye."

Mr. Cox: "Miss Gary, you've done noble work. I'm goin' to try to see that you get a five-dollar raise next session."

Mr. Farrow: "I'm sorry to tell you that the other day I was talking to some of the people who takes in boarders, and they said that on account of the way prices were going they'd have to charge \$5 more a month board, but we sure do thank you for what you have done."

Miss Gary: "Thank you. Can't all of you come down to the station with me to say good-bye?"

All: "Yes'm." [Follow her out, talking, "we hates to see her go." etc.]

[On the outside they yell]:

“Day school, day school,
Take a back seat.
Night school, night school,
Got ‘em far beat.”

[Exit all except Warren, who looks dejected, and Minnie Niagara.]

Minnie: “I’m sorry I done it, Warren. I done it jes’ fer a joke to tease you.”

Warren: “Oh, that’s all right, Minnie.”

Minnie: “Please don’t be mad, for I don’t feel good when you’re at outs with me.” [Exit.]

Warren: “I shouldn’t have minded, but I didn’t mean for her to know yet. I guess Minnie is more my kind.” [Picks up local paper.]

[Enter Jimmie, who hands him a note from Miss Gary.]

Jimmie: “Here’s a note from Miss Gary. I don’t see what she’s writing about five minutes after she’s left.”

Warren: “She says: [Reads aloud] ‘Be sure not to forget to write Mr. Harrington. It seems to me a splendid chance for you.’” [Stops reading aloud suddenly.]

Jimmie: “Why don’t you go on?”

Warren: “She’s jes’ a sayin’ good-bye in the rest of it.” [Puts it in his pocket.]

Jimmie: “Funny she didn’t write one to all of us.”

Warren: “You’re too young to know.”

Jimmie: “Good night.”

Warren [reading local paper]: “Jimmie, I’ve got a plan.”

Jimmie: “What is it?”

Warren: “You know that science man who was down here in July? He told me that the kind of sand on our place is good for making glass. I see in this paper where the new folks in the Laurens glass factory are looking for that kind of sand. They call it ‘silica’. I’m going to write them about it. Think, Jimmie, I kin write it all by myself now, and sign my own name. [Sits with pen in hand for a while.] Wonder how much sand it will take to put us through school.”

Curtain.

ACT III.

Several weeks later. Scene same as Act I. Increased tidiness. Curtains at windows, etc.

Discovered—Jimmie reading. Knock at center door.

Jimmie: “Good night. I wish folks would quit botherin’ me and give me a chance to spend a few quiet hours with Robinson Crusoe.” [Opens door.]

[Enter Mary and Miss Gary.]

Mary: “Howdy, Jimmie. You know I told you Miss Gary was coming by today?”

Jimmie: "Yep, and we's showly been stirrin' up some dust to git ready for her."

Miss Gary: "I hope your mother hasn't gone to any trouble, but the room certainly is improved."

Jimmie: "Tain't only ma. Me and Pap an' Warren all been a helpin'. I'll go tell 'em you'se here, 'cause they'se powerful anxious to see you." [Exit Jimmie left.]

[Knock at center door. Mary opens it. Enter H. and Peyton.]

Mr. H. [furtly]: "Is this the home of Mr. Warren Anderson? [Seeing Miss Gary] How do you do, Miss Gary? It's an unexpected pleasure to find you here."

Miss Gary [shakes hands]: "I'm glad to see you."

[Mr. H. introduces Peyton.]

Mary: "If you want to see Mr. Anderson, I'll go call him."

Mr. H.: "Thank you." [Exit Mary.] "And while we wait for him, Peyton, I suggest that you go over to the old Amos man's house."

Peyton: "All right. You certainly know how to trim edges, Harrington." [Exit Peyton center.]

Mr. H.: "Miss Gary, this is an opportunity which means a great deal to me."

Miss Gary: "I'm glad that it is to your advantage, but most of all, I am glad for these people, whose sand you are going to buy. You have a big chance to help them."

Mr. H.: "Oh! I'm not talking about these common people, or their dirt. What I mean is the chance to have a few words with you."

Miss Gary: "You needn't speak so contemptuously of my friends. They are as good as you or I. Poverty and ignorance have been their curse."

Mr. H.: "I beg your pardon. I meant no offence. To give any would be my last thought. You know that I think too much of you to hurt you in any way."

Miss Gary: "You have been kind in many things, but I don't like your attitude to my work."

Mr. H.: "That is because it fills your life so that I am crowded out. I am jealous of it."

[Enter Mary, center.]

Mary: "Warren will be here in a few minutes. He said to tell you to wait. And, Miss Gary, we must run along now, for mama called to me that we have company."

Mr. H. to Miss G.: "I hope that I may see you again soon, and prove my point more clearly."

Miss Gary: "You have rather a hard task, for my work is everything to me. Good-bye."

[Exit Mary and Miss Gary, left.]

Mr. H.: "I'm not easily discouraged, so good-bye for the present."

[Enter Peyton, center.]

Peyton: "Bud Amos wasn't at home, but will be back shortly."

Mr. H.: "Very good. I think we can get what we want here."

Mr. H. [looking around room]: "It's just as I thought. Simple farm people. We can offer the boy \$25 a month for all the silica we need. He'll never realize the real value of it and that will seem like a gold mine to him."

Mr. Peyton: "Harrington, that isn't my way of doing business. The factory is able to pay and should pay the usual rate per ton, which is small enough. Saving in such matters won't get us anywhere."

Harrington: "Peyton, you are worse than a girl; always having cold feet over something. Cutting off a few edges won't hurt. Nobody will be wiser and all that we save is our profit. [They hear some one approaching.] Just watch how my plan works."

[Enter Mr. Anderson, center, surprised, approaches and shakes hands.]

Mr. A.: "Good evenin', gentlemen."

Mr. H.: "Good afternoon. I suppose this is Mr. Warren Anderson?"

Mr. A.: "Nop. I'm his Pap. Won't you have a seat?"

Mr. H.: "We've come down to see your son about the silica which is on your farm."

Mr. A.: "I didn't know thar wuz no sech wild creeter roun' these parts."

Mr. H.: "I beg your pardon. I wasn't speaking of a wild animal. I meant a kind of sand which is found on your place, and which is used in making glass."

Mr. A.: "Oh, is that it. Well, I'll be powerful glad to get rid of all of it I kin. You kin have all you want jest fer the hauling it off."

Mr. H.: "You are very generous, but I really couldn't take such an advantage of you. I would insist on paying you something. Say, \$10.00 a month if that is agreeable."

Mr. A.: "Showly that seems like a heap o' money fer plain dirt, but I guess you know whut you're offerin'."

Mr. H.: "Well, I'm rather rushed, so if we can get the agreement signed we must hurry on. [Gets out paper.] If you sign here it will be all fixed."

[Mr. A. takes paper; goes to table; gets pen and ink. Puts on glasses very deliberately. Harrington, looking pleased, and Peyton looking troubled, begin to talk on side.]

Mr. A.: "From what I kin gether this here writin' means that I'm to let you have all the sand you want offin' my place for \$10.00 per month?"

Mr. H.: "Correct. And if you hurry you will oblige me greatly."

Mr. A.: "A man learnin' to write after he's seventy can't get up much speed."

[Enter Warren.]

Warren: "Good evening, gentlemen; I suppose you have come down about the silica on our farm? [Discovers Mr. A. writing.] What are you up to, Dad?"

[Harrington irritated.]

Mr. A.: "These gentlemen, Mr. Harrington and Mr. Peyton, [Warren gives quick interested look] have just made us an offer of \$10.00 a month fer some dirt off'n our farm, and I thought we'd do well to be rid uv it."

Mr. H.: "We were in a hurry, so we discussed the matter with your father, and he thinks our offer unusually generous. Have you finished signing?"

Warren [steps to table and takes paper up]: "My Dad don't know nothing about this business. [Tears paper.] An' you're jes' been trying to take him in."

Mr. H.: "He offered to give it to us, so you needn't act high handed. If twenty-five will suit you, we can trade at that. Sign your name here. We are anxious to catch the 6:30 to Columbia, so we will appreciate your being in a hurry."

Warren: "You can catch the 6:30, but it will be without my signature."

Mr. H.: "Oh, well, make your mark."

Warren: "I don't have to, and I'm glad I have sense enough to see through this scheme of yours. I know that the silica you use every month comes to a heap mor'n \$25.00, if you pay the regular price, and I don't mean to be cheated in no such way."

Mr. H.: "Oh, very well; if that's the way you feel about it, we'll go around to see one of your neighbors and make a trade."

Warren: "You can't skeer me that way, fer I know Bud Amos is the only one in this section 'sides us with silica land, and he ain't got enough sand to part with any. When you can offer me a *square deal* I'll trade."

Peyton: "Harrington, I've stood as much of this as I can. What he says is true, and there's no use wasting more words. We might as well sign for a year's supply on his farm."

Mr. Harrington: "I wash my hands of it. You and this fellow must be in league."

Mr. Peyton: "Very well, Mr. Anderson, here's our agreement for a year's supply at \$3.00 a ton, our regular rate."

Warren [reads]: "That's fair enough." [Signs.]

Mr. Peyton: "That is all, so we will say good-bye." [They shake hands.]

[Harrington nods curtly. Peyton and Harrington exit, center.]

Mr. A.: "I don't understand these new fangled ways—I guess it takes schoolin', er maybe I wuz jest born a darn fool. [Exit, center.]

Warren [aside]: "That man—Miss Gary's friend—will bear watching."

[Enter Jimmie, left.]

Warren: "Buddie, I see us as college men doin' big things."

Jimmie: "Which one of those guys dropt a gold mine in here?"

Warren: "Neither, but one of them is willin' to give a gold mine fer some of my sand."

Jimmie: "Good night! I wish Ma would take a turn like that 'stead of always tellin' me to wash since Miss Gary was here. Even Pa's decided to wash his hands every day now, and I've seen him helping Ma bring in the stovewood twice. Ain't it funny how learnin' affects folks?"

Warren: "Does it seem to have changed anybody else around here?"

Jimmie: "Seems to me like Minnie Niagara's about to be a real lady since she's got to copyin' Miss Gary's way o' dressin' and leavin' off that red stuff from her face, and she ain't slapped the twins in a week."

[Enter Mary Ferguson, center, open letter in hand.]

Mary: "Oh, Warren, listen to the good news. I've just gotten the scholarship to Winthrop this fall, and I can go and learn to be a real school teacher like Miss Gary is doing. She is a junior and I'm just a freshman, it will be wonderful to be near her."

Warren: "That is good news. Looks like it must be Christmas Day or Fourth of July for all of us."

Jimmie: "Good night! I believe all of Elko Township's got the schoolin' germ, and the whole place has gone batty."

Mary [has started out]: "Oh, Warren, I was about to forget to tell you. Miss Gary wants you to come over to our house before she leaves tonight. There's something special she wants to see you about."

Warren: "I know it must be Christmas Day now."

Mary: "Has Santa called on you yet, Jimmie?"

Jimmie: "Good night! Nope! And I don't keer, for I don't think he's givin' nothing 'cept school scholarships today in place of plain sand."

Warren: "Yes, and maybe plain sand will help me get something besides school scholarships."

Jimmie [to Mary]: "Good night. [Disgusted] What does he mean?"

[Enter Mr. A.]

Mr. A.: "Them two dudy fellows that's jes' been here didn't catch the 6:30 they talked such a heap about. They wuzn't traveling by train. I followed 'em er while going off in their sporty ortimobile, and they stopped by Bud Amos' house."

Warren: "That doesn't sound good. They'll be cheatin' the old man worse'n they tried to do us."

Mr. A.: "That's jes' what I 'lowed. Maybe I ain't sech a durn fool after all."

Curtain.

ACT IV.

Five years later. A week before Christmas. Great improvement in appearance of room. New furnishings. Holly wreaths in window and other Christmas touches. Modern dining room. Fire in the grate.

Discovered.—Mr. Anderson, reading paper by fire. Mrs. Anderson adding Christmas touches.

Mrs. A.: "I wonder if Jimmie won't ever get through washin'. I'm thankful he has learned to keep clean, but I wish he would hurry along now, for I'm afraid Miss Gary's train will be in before he gets himself down there."

Mr. A.: "Since I had some learnin', looks like I don't have the rheumatiz so bad, so I don't think getting out in the cold will hurt me, and I hate for her to get in without some of us to meet her."

Mrs. A.: "Well, wrap up, and I don't guess it'll give you any more misery."

[Mr. A. puts on coat and hat. Mrs. A. straightens his hat and muffler. Exit left. Mrs. A. straightens room.]

Knock [Mrs. A. opens door. Enter Miss Gary.]

Mrs. A.: "Howdy do! I'm sorry we didn't get down in time. Pa's just left the house to meet you."

Miss Gary: "That's all right. I ran across the vacant lots and I guess I missed him that way."

Mrs. A.: "Well, child, take off your things."

[Enter Jimmie, left.]

Mrs. A.: "Here's Jimmie, he can take them upstairs for you."

Miss Gary: "Hello, Jimmie! How you have grown! Most ready for high school I guess."

Jimmie [bashfully]: "Yes'm." [Exit with wraps.]

Mrs. A.: "Warren says Jimmie must surely have a college education, and his Pa and I are plannin' that way."

Miss Gary: "How is Warren?"

[They sit by fire.]

Mrs. A.: "He's certainly making good progress and I won't ever forget that you kinder set us on our feet. He is sorry he can't get home until nex' week. He has junior examination then. He hates awful to miss your visit. How do you like your work helpin' with all the grown folks' school? It seems like you're powerful young for such a job?"

Miss Gary: "Yes, it is a big work, but not as hard as it was for those who started it six years ago. We are only reaping what they sowed, and in another year or two everybody in South Carolina will be able to read their Bibles, their letters, and the newspapers for themselves."

[Enter Mary Ferguson.]

Miss Gary: "Mary!"

Mary: "Harriett!" [They embrace.] "Howdy do, Mrs. Anderson."

Mrs. A.: "Howdy, Mary. I'm going to leave you girls to entertain yourselves for a few minutes, if you will excuse me." [Exit left.]

Miss Gary: "Tell me how you like your work? Is being school marm better than learning how to be?" [Sits in front of fire.]

Mary: "Oh, I love both, but nothing could be more fun than teaching my pupils who are eager to get what they missed when they were children."

Miss Gary: "I'm glad you like it for I have a trust to pass on to you."

Mary: "What do you mean? You talk as though you expected to die."

Miss Gary: "No, not that, though it may be worse [laughing]. [Then serious.] "I want to tell you all about it. My father is very old and feeble and I'm afraid won't be with me much longer. He is anxious that I should 'settle down' as he expresses it, before he leaves me, and it does seem that I am due him that much satisfaction."

Mary: "Who is the lucky man?"

Miss Gary: "That's where the pinch comes. You remember a Mr. Harrington connected with the glass factory in Laurens? I have gone with him for several years, and I like him heaps. He says the *real thing* will come later."

Mary: "Risky business, I think."

Miss Gary: "Yes, it seems so, and especially since my heart is involved elsewhere [dreamily]. *That* seems so hopeless. But enough of myself. The place where you come in is that I want to suggest you as my successor."

Mary: "Me!"

Miss Gary: "Yes, your heart is in the cause and you are thoroughly capable."

Mary: "It would be wonderful, but must you really give it up?"

Miss Gary: "Yes, honey; I have written a note telling Mr. Harrington to come Sunday for his final answer, and I only waited to mail it until I had mentioned it to you."

[Enter Jimmie, left.]

Miss Gary: "Here is Jimmie. I'll get him to run and mail it. Jimmie, you won't mind running down and dropping this in the postoffice for me, will you?"

Jimmie: "Not a bit [looking at note], only I'd rather be mailing it to Warren. Even in September he had a regular Christmas when one of your letters came."

Miss Gary: "Well, Jimmie, I'll write him another so he can celebrate at the proper date, just to satisfy you."

[Exit Jimmie, center.]

Mary: "Harriett, you know Warren still writes to Minnie Niagara, and she talks like they're going to get married. It seems funny that he should waste himself on her when so many fine girls are crazy about him." [Miss Gary winces slightly.]

Miss Gary: "Has Minnie improved any?"

Mary: "For awhile it looked like she would do better, but she's gone back to where she started from. She hasn't any more ambition than a flea."

[Enter Mrs. Anderson.]

Mrs. A.: "Have you seen Jimmie?"

Mary: "He's just gone to mail a letter for Harriett."

Mrs. A.: "Mary, please run after him and tell him to stop by Robertson's and bring me a can of baking powder. I'm clean out and I need it for supper biscuits."

Mary: "All right, ma'am." [Exit.]

Mrs. A.: "We'll sit down and talk til' she gets back." [Starts to sit.] [Enter Mary, center.]

Mary: "Look who's coming, Mrs. Anderson."

Miss Gary [looking out]: "Warren!"

[Enter Warren.]

Warren: "Well, Mother, Miss Gary, Mary." [Greets each.]

Mrs. A.: "How did you manage to get away?"

Warren: "Oh, I shuffled out of two exams. and made it a few days earlier."

Mary: "Minnie told me you had wired her about it, but said it was a secret, so I kept mum."

[Warren looks troubled. Miss Gary tries to conceal nervous jealousy.]

Mary: "I'll run on now and see about the baking powder." [Exit center.]

Mrs. A.: "Thank you, and I'll look after supper." [Exit left.]

Warren: "Oh, Harriett, I've nearly crammed myself to death to finish up my exams. and get down in time for your visit."

Miss Gary: "I suppose that is what you wired Minnie?"

Warren: "That was about an affair of hers she wants me to help her with. If I tell, it will spoil it all, but please trust me, that was all."

Miss Gary: "It's very immaterial." [Indifferently.]

Warren: "Is that the way you feel when it means everything to me? I'm just a school boy yet, though I'm old enough to be through. I don't feel worthy to ask you, but I'm afraid to keep on waiting. I must tell you that I love you better than anything else in the world."

Miss Gary [agitated]: "I am sorry that I misjudged you."

Warren: "All that I may ever be is due to your inspiration and help, and since the first day I saw you I've dreamed about and planned for the day when I could ask you to be my very own."

Harriett: "I'm afraid that can never be."

Warren [dejected]: "I should have known that I was asking too much."

Miss Gary: "A real man like you can't ask too much. You misunderstand."

Warren [has crossed to center, turns]: "My, but you are good to say that. What is the trouble, then [doubtfully]? Can it be my family?"

Miss Gary: "Warren, let's clear up that point at once. [Sits beside her.] I have known your family for five years. They are the best blood, and the thing which means most they are able to *do* things. They have showed the same old pioneer spirit which claimed this land for the white man, and the kind of courage which has held it for civilization down through the present war. The gloom of five years past was due to the misfortune of poverty and ignorance. All that they needed was a helping hand to give them a little lift."

Warren: "Yes, we can never forget that you came like a regular fairy godmother."

Miss Gary: "That is a pretty thought, but to be perfectly truthful, you know that it took more than a fairy wand for your parents to grasp the opportunities which should have been theirs half a century ago. They fought no less a battle in this very room than you fought a few months earlier on the fields of France. The same kind of courage won both. Ashamed of such people! How could I be?"

Warren: "I didn't know that you would feel that way. I was afraid you might mind about the way they dress and don't do things with style."

Miss Gary: "Dress and style are all right in their place, but they do not make *real people*. They can be turned out from any factory by the car load. The strong, dependable spirit is the hard thing to find. It isn't ground out by machinery, the product of a day. It must grow, and it takes multitudes of dampening showers, and stormy days, followed by the sunshine of God's grace for the human soul to reach any heights sublime. I would indeed be blind to let a shabby garment conceal the stalwart character of your parents."

Warren: "You are a regular soul seer. That's why you help folks so. It makes me love you and want you more than ever. You feel all this—what is it, then, that's keeping us apart?"

Miss Gary: "It's not you or your family. The trouble is with me."

Warren: "You aren't making light of this, are you?"

Miss Gary: "No, my heart is too heavy for that. I couldn't be frivolous about such a matter. The thing is, I have already given my promise to another—my fate is sealed."

[Enter Mr. A., center.]

Mr. A.: "Well, I've had a right smart chase after you, Miss Gary. [Seeing Warren.] Where did you drop from?"

Warren: "I got out a few days earlier, but I may have to go back."

Mr. A.: "What kind of ravin' is that? You know I'll keep my boy over Christmas, especially since Miss Gary is here. After we look over the night school tonight we can have a regular family reunion. This is the first time Miss Gary's ever stayed with us and there's a heap of things I want to talk to her about."

Miss Gary: "Things have gone well with you haven't they in the past few years?"

Mr. A.: "I've had some of both kinds of luck. After our first term of night school, Warren got in with some glass factory folks who paid him well for his silica, and gave him a start. It seems like one of them, a Mr. Harrington, wuz a kind of gentleman crook, and he broke his contract when he found that silica could be got cheaper from poor old Bud Amos."

[Miss Gary aghast.]

Mr. A.: "You look kinder cold like. Better draw up closer to the fire."

Miss Gary: "Thanks [moves up]. What happened then?"

Mr. A.: "He cheated the old fellow pretty bad. He tried to do us the same way, and I wuz about to act like a old blockhead, but Warren was too smart for him. Well, after we couldn't sell the silica any more, it looked pretty bad—like Warren'd have to give up his college work, but me and him stuck at it with the farmin'. Later on we found another silica market and that put us on easy street, and best of all I still like to work. It's the best medicine I know uv fer my kind of rheumatiz. I'm even able to help my old lady with bringing in the stove wood. And that reminds me she wuz callin' fer some about half an hour ago." [Exit, left.]

[Miss Gary sits silent.]

Warren: "What did you mean by saying just now that your fate was sealed?"

Miss Gary: "That man Harrington has my word!"

Warren: "*You* promised to *him*!"

Miss Gary: "Don't."

Warren: "Do you love him?"

Miss Gary: "No, I never have. I only hoped that it would come, later, as he said. But my word has just gone. Jimmie has gone to mail it now."

Warren: "If that's it, just so it hasn't reached his hands, I'll have it and things will soon be straightened out."

[Warren starts out, collides with Jimmie. Enter Jimmie, bedraggled.]

Jimmie: "Miss Gary, I'm awful sorry. You see it got all torn. I got in a fight with the Jones twins. Minnie told 'em to get it away. I run as fast as I could, but the young 'un headed me off on Easy street and she got the other half."

Warren: "That's all right, old chap. Best day's work you ever did. Here's a quarter for that half of the letter."

Jimmie: "Oh, boy. [Aside] He don't know she's going to write him one all his own or he wouldn't be givin' quarters for half of other folks'" [Exit, left.]

[Enter Buck.] Buck: "Did you bring hit? [Sees Miss Gary; surprised.] Oh, howdy, Miss Gary."

Warren: "Yes, here it is." [Hands him box.]

Buck [opens box and holds up ring]: "Lordy, ain't hit a beauty? It sure beats Sears Roebuck all to pieces. I'll call Minnie in. She's kinder bashful today. [Goes to door and calls] Oh, Minnie!"

Warren: "Now you see what I was wiring Minnie about."

[Enter Minnie, dressed as bride with veil.]

Miss Gary: "Let me wish you both much happiness."

Buck: "Thank you, ma'am. Everybody's been er congratulating Minnie. We's on our way to the parson's now. Won't you come and see it fixed up?"

Warren: "Thank you. We'll join you in a minute."

[Exit Buck and Minnie arm in arm.]

Buck [to Minnie]: "Come on, Peaches."

Warren: "A pretty good pair. [Picks up letter.] Now there is only half a letter out against you. You can't say that you are breaking your promise by giving me a chance."

Miss Gary: "I would be breaking half, though."

[Enter Buck and Minnie.]

Buck: "Say, Warren, I want a word with you. [Takes him down front of stage. Girls talk. Buck is much embarrassed.] I hate to mention it, but if there's any change comin' from the ring I'd like to ask you to turn it over to me. My trousseau has been a unusual expense."

[Enter Jimmie with other half the letter plus a black eye.]

Jimmie: "I had a awful fight, but I don't mind gettin' smashed if quarters are growin' eroun'."

Warren: "Here." [Pitches him fifty cents.]

Jimmie: "Gee, I wish they had tore it in er dozen pieces! I'm goin' to look for some more." [Exit Jimmie, center, running.]

Minnie: "Miss Gary, I'm awful worried erbout your letter. I made the twins do it. Fer I overheard you tellin' Mary Ferguson erbout what you wuz writin' that Harrin'ton man, and I thought I'd jes ease it away from Jimmie, but he had the fightin' spirit too strong."

Miss Gary: "You're wonderful, Minnie. You have done me this great service, I want to thank you."

Minnie: "I'm glad I made you feel good. I'm so happy I'm most 'bout to bust!"

Buck: "Come, Peaches, 'fore your ring begins to turn. They ain't no life time guarantee on hit. [Exit Buck and Minnie.]

Warren [holds up letter]: "Now that your promise is redeemed, what must I do with it?"

Miss Gary: "Possession gives the right of ownership."

Warren: "Then here ends the promise [burns letter], and here begins the ownership [takes her in his arms].

Jimmie [who reappears during the last speech]: "Good night! It took sand to do it!"

Curtain.

